# Nelson and Colne College

## Access and participation plan 2024-25 to 2027-28

### Introduction and strategic aim

Nelson and Colne College Group is a general Further and Higher Education provider principally serving its local communities. The Group is a single legal entity comprising Nelson and Colne College, Accrington and Rossendale College and Lancashire Adult Learning. It operates from three distinct sites each of which serves a different demographic.

The Group's Nelson Campus is the only tertiary provider in the Borough of Pendle and mainly provides 16-19 education ranging from entry-level to level 3 technical courses, academic and T-levels. It also provides a number of courses for adults and delivers Higher Education courses leading to level 4 and 5 vocational qualifications.

The Accrington Campus is based in a community that is served by several school sixth-forms. It has few 16-19 learners studying traditional academic programmes. Its 16-19 programmes are almost entirely focused on skills-based technical courses. The Accrington Campus offers Higher Education programmes leading to honours degrees in range of subject areas.

The Group has a site in Brierfield. This site manages adult community learning for the whole of Lancashire. It does not deliver any Higher Education programmes, but is important in the consideration of the Group's access and participation because of its wide engagement with adult learners across the County.

The Group is the sponsor of the Pendle Education Trust, which comprises three primary and two secondary schools in and around the Borough of Pendle. It also partners with the LET Education Trust, which comprises two primary and two secondary schools in the Borough of Hyndburn in which the Accrington Campus is situated. Through these trusts, the Group has access to school pupils of all ages across both of its principal catchments.

The Group strives for excellence in all that it does and was judged 'Outstanding' by Ofsted in March 2022.

**Local context**

The Group serves communities where the proportion of adults in employment who have Higher Education qualifications is well below the national average. The Group's catchment is in East Lancashire and the most recent statistics are as follows.[1]
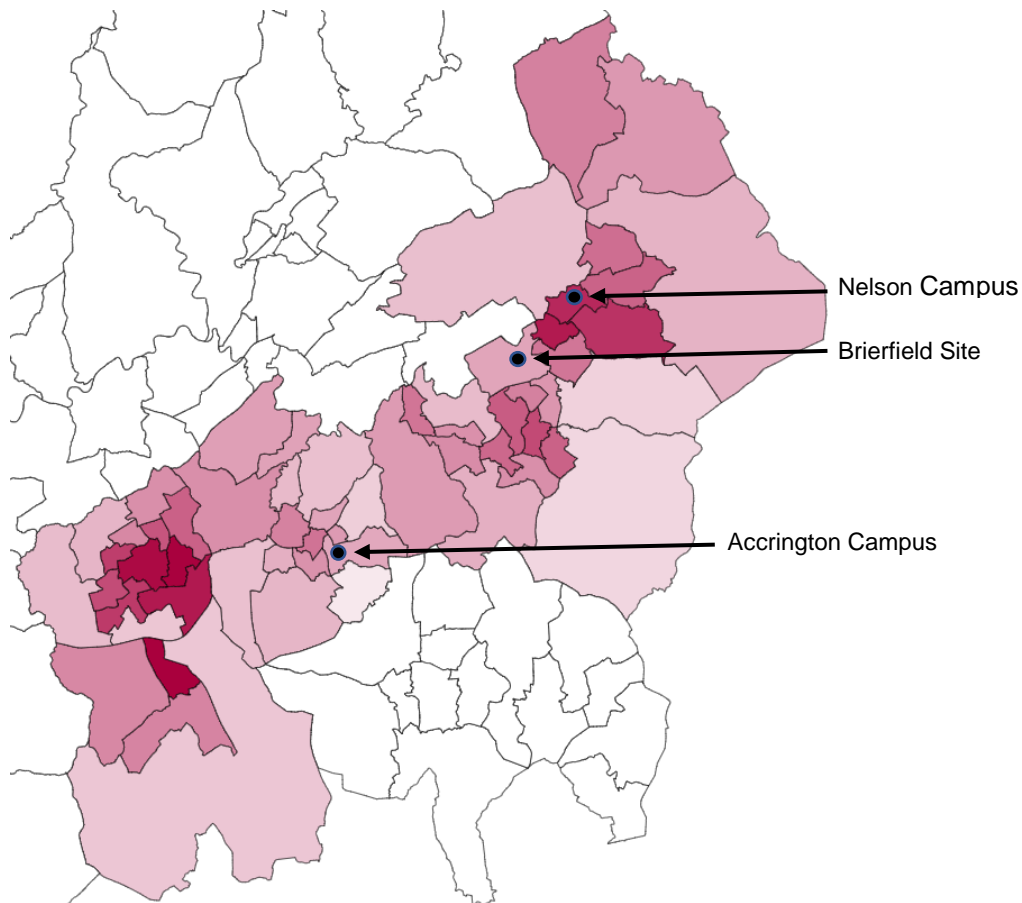
|  | East Lancashire | All Lancashire | North West | Great Britain |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Degree or equivalent and above | 18.6% | 24.1% | 27.8% | 31.6% |
| Higher Education below degree level | 10.1% | 10.4% | 7.8% | 8.4% |

[1] Academic qualifications from the annual population survey, 2018, Lancashire County Council

| Total | | 28.7% | 34.5% | 35.6% | 40.0% |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

The Group's extensive links with local employers, and the findings of the Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Report confirm that this shortage of Higher Education and skills is a significant constraint on the area's economic development.

The Group serves some of the most severely disadvantaged wards in East Lancashire sub-region.

Nelson Campus

Brierfield Site

Accrington Campus

**Multiply Disadvantaged Wards in East Lancashire[2]**

Fewer graduates return from study outside the area than leave to take up that study, so the region is a net exporter of higher academic skills. However, North West regional statistics show that while the North West attracts only 26.7% of its graduate employees from outside the region, it is successful at retaining 67.7% of graduates who study within the region (c.f. London 73.7% & 51.7% respectively).[3] This suggests that encouraging more students to study locally would benefit the local economy.

**Vision**

The College's vision statement is as follows:

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[2] Source: Census 2021: Household deprivation, Lancashire County Council
[3] Carrascal-Incera A, Green A, Kollydas K, Smith A & Taylor A, 2021, University of Birmingham Research Paper.

The shared 'common purpose' of the Group is to 'create the extraordinary' and we do this through phenomenal staff, outstanding teaching and learning and an individualised approach to each of our learners.

The Group has a clear purpose to secure excellent academic and career pathways for all learners, and to deliver education and training of the highest quality.

The Group is establishing itself as a beacon for teaching and learning, with a national reputation and the capacity to support other colleges in their improvement journey. It is an innovative provider; a research hub for teaching and learning, with a clear ambition to deliver the best possible experience and outcomes for learners.

Collaboration is key to success, and meaningful and productive relationships with stakeholders and employers are key to the financial and educational success of the institution.

The Group has a strategic plan in which it commits to working closely with employers to increase their involvement in the co-creation of programmes to provide improved pathways to sustained professional employment.

Consequently, the Group's Higher Education mission is to provide a range of high-quality study opportunities that:

- provide high quality aspirational routes into high value professional and technical careers locally and regionally
- are accessible to adult returners as well as school/college leavers;
- retain students within the locality so that they can benefit the regional economy;
- provide (wherever practicable) valuable qualifications at level 4 and/or 5 as well as a ladder of progression to level 6;
- are available as apprenticeships where a suitable standard exists.

# Risks to equality of opportunity

The detail of the Group's Assessment of Performance is set out in Annex A below.  From this analysis, the Group proposes to target the following risks.

In most cases, there is insufficient objective data to prove either that the gaps addressed below are caused by the risks listed or what specific actions would best reduce them.  This analysis has been completed on the basis of reasonable assumptions about causes and likely effects.  The Group will gather data on the impact of its interventions to help it to reflect on causalities, impacts and value for money.  This emerging evidence base will be used to evaluate its actions in the light of evidence and to adapt its actions as required over the life of this plan.

Information and Guidance

2.1     There is a clear gender split by subject area in the Group's intakes.  There is no evidence of bias in selection; this split is the result of gender differences in applications to particular subjects.

2.2     The ethnic mix in the Group's intake is currently approximately in line with its expectations.  However, the proportion of ethnic minorities in the relevant age groups of its catchment is rising and there is a risk that the intake of BME students may not keep up with this changing demographic.

It is highly likely that a lack of appropriate pre-application advice and guidance is contributing to these risks.

Perception of Higher Education

3.1     Perceptions of stereotypical gender subjects and careers may be limiting access to study that candidates might find rewarding.

3.2     There are strong perceptions of subjects and career opportunities within local BME communities, which may lead potential BME candidates to believe that some Higher Education opportunities are 'not for them'.

It is highly likely that engrained perceptions within the Group's catchment communities are contributing to these risks.

Insufficient Academic Support

6.1     There is a wide gap in four-year aggregate continuation and completion rates between full- and part-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5.

6.2     Completion and attainment rates for the Group's disabled students are lower than those for students with no disabilities.  The majority of its disabled students report either mental health issues or dyslexia.

6.3     There is a gap in part-time continuation rates between young and mature students.

There is no clear evidence of the causes of these gaps, but it is likely that they result, at least in part, from not having the of out-of-college academic support mechanisms typical of less disadvantaged students.

It is likely that increased levels of academic support would reduce these gaps.

Insufficient Personal Support

7.1     The gap in continuation and completion rates between full- and part-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 may result, at least in part, from not having the of out-of-college personal support mechanisms typical of less disadvantaged students.

7.2 Completion and attainment rates for the Group's disabled students are lower than those for students with no disabilities. The majority of its disabled students report either mental health issues or dyslexia.

7.3 There is a gap in part-time continuation rates between young and mature students.

As above, there is insufficient evidence of the causes of these gaps, but it is likely that they could be mitigated by increased support to help students facing personal issues.

Mental Health

8.1 Completion and attainment rates for the Group's disabled students are lower than those for students with no disabilities. A substantial minority of its disabled students report mental health issues.

Cost Pressures

10.1 The Group has strong anecdotal evidence that financial pressures are a major cause of non-continuation. These pressures are very likely to affect students from IMD quintiles 1 & 2 more than other groups and are very likely to contribute to the lower rate of continuation and completion of full-time students in these groups.

10.2 There is a gap (7%) in continuation rates between full-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5. There is no clear evidence of the cause of this gap, but it is likely that it results, at least in part, from not having the of out-of-college support mechanisms typical of less disadvantaged students.

Progression from Higher Education

12.1 There is a wide gap (16.7%) between progression rates for white and BME students. The Group does not see a similar gap in internal student results data, so this gap appears to be the result of non-academic issues.

## Objectives

1 Ethnicity

1.1 The Group will increase the proportion of BME students in its intake by approximately 1% per annum such that it matches the current proportion in its catchment by September 2027. Specifically, it will target 17% in 2024, 18% in 2025, 19% in 2026 and 20% in 2027.

1.2 The Group will increase the proportions of BME entrants to Engineering & Sustainable Technology to reach a minimum of 10% by 2027.

It will do this by means of outreach activities providing information and guidance to school pupils, college students and relevant community groups

1.3 The Group believes that the 16.7% gap in progression rates between white and Asian students may be the result of multiple factors, some of which it may not be able to mitigate. However, it will commit to reducing this gap by 2% per annum by providing a new extra-curricular employability programme with specific targets of 15% in 2024, 13% in 2025, 11% in 2026 and 9% in 2027.

2 Gender

2.1 The Group will increase female entry to full-time Engineering and Technology to reach a minimum of 10% by 2027, with individual annual targets of 3% in 2024, 6% in 2025, 8% in 2026 and 10% in 2027.

It will do this by means of outreach activities providing information and guidance to school pupils, college students and relevant community groups

3 Disadvantage

3.1 The Group will narrow the 7% gap in continuation rates between full-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 by 1.5% per annum, virtually eliminating the gap by 2027. Individual year targets will be 5.5% in 2024, 4% in 2025, 2.5% in 2026 and 1% in 2027.

3.2 It will close the 6% gap in completion rates for full-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 by 1.5% per annum, eliminating the gap by 2027. Individual year targets will be 4.5% in 2024, 3% in 2025, 1.5% in 2026 and 0% in 2027.

It will close the 7% gap in completion rates for part-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 by 1.5% per annum, virtually eliminating the gap by 2027. Individual year targets will be 5.5% in 2024, 4% in 2025, 2.5% in 2026 and 1% in 2027.

It will achieve this by means of improved on-programme student support and by targeted financial help.

4 Disability

The Group is not confident that gaps in in outcomes for disabled students can be closed over the life of this plan. Some of these gaps are likely to be the result of matters, such as mental health issues, that may not be wholly mitigated by the planned interventions.

4.1 Nevertheless, it will commit to narrowing the gaps in completion rates between students with disabilities and those without. For full-time students it will close the 2017-18 18% gap by 4% per annum and for part-time students it will narrow the 14% gap by 2% per annum. The specific targets for full-time students will be 14% in 2024, 10% in 2025, 6% in 2026 and 2% in 2027. Those for part-time students will be 12% in 2024, 10% in 2025, 8% in 2026 and 6% in 2027.

4.2     It will commit to narrowing the 8.5% gap in attainment rates between full-time students with disabilities and those without by 2% per annum. The specific targets for full-time students will be 7% in 2024, 5% in 2025, 3% in 2026 and 1% in 2027.

It will achieve this by means of improved on-programme student support in terms of enhanced academic support, additional non-academic support and targeted help for students' metal health.

5       Age

5.1     The Group will close the 10.5% gap in part-time continuation rates between young and mature student by 2% per annum, with specific targets of 8% in 2024, 6% in 2025, 4% in 2026 and 2% in 2027

# Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

| Intervention strategy: PTA_1 Risks 2 & 3 | |
|---|---|
| **Objectives and targets** | 1.1    The Group will increase the proportion of BME students in its intake by approximately 1% per annum such that it matches the current proportion in its catchment by September 2027. Specifically, it will target 17% in 2024, 18% in 2025, 19% in 2026 and 20% in 2027.<br><br>1.2    The Group will increase the proportions of BME entrants to Engineering & Sustainable Technology to reach a minimum of 10% by 2027.<br><br>2.1    The Group will increase female entry to full-time Engineering and Technology to reach a minimum of 10% by 2027, with individual annual targets of 3% in 2024, 6% in 2025, 8% in 2026 and 10% in 2027. |
| **Risks to equality of opportunity** | 2.1    There is a clear gender split by subject area in the Group's intakes. There is no evidence of bias in selection; this split is the result of gender differences in applications to particular subjects.<br><br>2.2    The ethnic mix in the Group's intake is currently approximately in line with its expectations. However, the proportion of ethnic minorities in the relevant age groups of its catchment is rising and there is a risk that the intake of BME students may not keep up with this changing demographic.<br><br>3.1    Perceptions of stereotypical gender subjects and careers may be limiting access to study that candidates might find rewarding.<br><br>3.2    There are strong perceptions of subjects and career opportunities within local BME communities, which may lead potential BME candidates to believe that some Higher Education opportunities are 'not for them'. |

| Activity | Outcomes | Cross intervention? |
|---|---|---|
| Outreach to primary and secondary schools via the Group's multi-academy trust partners | One visit per school per annum from 2024/25 onward. | PTA _1, PTA_2, PTA_3 & PTA_4 address different aspects of the same group of risks by different methods |

| | | A total of 4 secondary and 5 primary schools reached each year, | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Administration | | Scheme operated effectively | No |
| Evaluations | | Evaluation commitments met | No |
| **Evidence base and rationale** | | These risks are grouped together because the same activities will serve to mitigate a group of risks. The rationale for outreach into school is to use the Group's established links and networks to provide school pupils will information, guidance and inspiration to raise career aspirations, to explain the role of Higher Education in maximising life chances and lifetime earnings and to break down barriers to access. | |
| **Evaluation** | | | |

| Activity | Outcomes | Method(s) of evaluation | Summary of publication plan |
|---|---|---|---|
| School Survey | Attitude surveys before and after visits to gauge the impact of the intervention | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors. Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Group feedback | Anonymous feedback from tutor groups after visits | Type 1 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee. Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Triennial Review | Review of these programmes, their impact and evaluation strategies | Type 1 | Internally, to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors. Externally, via (a) paper(s) in the Group's Academic Journals |

| **Intervention strategy: PTA_2 Risks 2 & 3** |
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| **Objectives and targets** | 1.1 The Group will increase the proportion of BME students in its intake by approximately 1% per annum such that it matches the current proportion in its catchment by September 2027. Specifically, it will target 17% in 2024, 18% in 2025, 19% in 2026 and 20% in 2027. |
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|---|---|---|---|
| | 1.2 | The Group will increase the proportions of BME entrants to Engineering & Sustainable Technology to reach a minimum of 10% by 2027. | |
| | 2.1 | The Group will increase female entry to full-time Engineering and Technology to reach a minimum of 10% by 2027, with individual annual targets of 3% in 2024, 6% in 2025, 8% in 2026 and 10% in 2027. | |
| **Risks to equality of opportunity** | 2.1 | There is a clear gender split by subject area in the Group's intakes. There is no evidence of bias in selection; this split is the result of gender differences in applications to particular subjects. | |
| | 2.2 | The ethnic mix in the Group's intake is currently approximately in line with its expectations. However, the proportion of ethnic minorities in the relevant age groups of its catchment is rising and there is a risk that the intake of BME students may not keep up with this changing demographic. | |
| | 3.1 | Perceptions of stereotypical gender subjects and careers may be limiting access to study that candidates might find rewarding. | |
| | 3.2 | There are strong perceptions of subjects and career opportunities within local BME communities, which may lead potential BME candidates to believe that some Higher Education opportunities are 'not for them'. | |

| Activity | Outcomes | Cross intervention? |
|---|---|---|
| Outreach to the Group's level 3 learners | One session per tutor group per annum from 2024/25 onward | PTA _1, PTA_2, PTA_3 & PTA_4 address different aspects of the same group of risks by different methods |
| Administration | Scheme operated effectively | No |
| Evaluations | Evaluation commitments met | No |

| **Evidence base and rationale** | These risks are grouped together because the same activities will serve to mitigate a group of risks. |
|---|---|
| | Outreach to the Group's very diverse level 3 groups already takes place, but the resource available is only sufficient to allow Higher Education teaching staff to make occasional visits to Further Education groups. The Group plans to extend this work to reach every tutor group with high impact activities, discussions and events during the life of their courses. By this means, the APP funding will allow a much greater level of activity than can be supported at present. |

| **Evaluation** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Activity** | **Outcomes** | **Method(s) of evaluation** | **Summary of publication plan** |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Group feedback | Anonymous feedback from tutor groups after visits | Type 1 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Recruitment Data | Increase in BME entrants in line with profiles. Shift in gender balances in line with profiles | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Triennial Review | Review of these programmes, their impact and evaluation strategies | Type 1 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, via (a) paper(s) in the Group's Academic Journals |

| Intervention strategy: PTA_3 Risks 2 & 3 | |
|---|---|
| **Objectives and targets** | 1.1 The Group will increase the proportion of BME students in its intake by approximately 1% per annum such that it matches the current proportion in its catchment by September 2027. Specifically, it will target 17% in 2024, 18% in 2025, 19% in 2026 and 20% in 2027.<br><br>1.2 The Group will increase the proportions of BME entrants to Engineering & Sustainable Technology to reach a minimum of 10% by 2027.<br><br>2.1 The Group will increase female entry to full-time Engineering and Technology to reach a minimum of 10% by 2027, with individual annual targets of 3% in 2024, 6% in 2025, 8% in 2026 and 10% in 2027. |
| **Risks to equality of opportunity** | 2.1 There is a clear gender split by subject area in the Group's intakes. There is no evidence of bias in selection; this split is the result of gender differences in applications to particular subjects.<br><br>2.2 The ethnic mix in the Group's intake is currently approximately in line with its expectations. However, the proportion of ethnic minorities in the relevant age groups of its catchment is rising and |

there is a risk that the intake of BME students may not keep up with this changing demographic.

3.1 Perceptions of stereotypical gender subjects and careers may be limiting access to study that candidates might find rewarding.

3.2 There are strong perceptions of subjects and career opportunities within local BME communities, which may lead potential BME candidates to believe that some Higher Education opportunities are 'not for them'.

| Activity | Outcomes | Cross intervention? |
|---|---|---|
| Identification of appropriate community groups for HE-specific outreach | Key target groups identified during 2023/24 | PTA _1, PTA_2, PTA_3 & PTA_4 address different aspects of the same group of risks by different methods |
| Outreach to community groups | outreach visits to commence 2024/25 and rise to at least 10 per year by 2028/29 | PTA _1, PTA_2, PTA_3 & PTA_4 address different aspects of the same group of risks by different methods |
| Administration | Scheme operated effectively | No |
| Evaluations | Evaluation commitments met | No |
| **Evidence base and rationale** | These risks are grouped together because the same activities will serve to mitigate a group of risks.<br>The Group is aware that there are community groups who have little understanding of the transformative nature of Higher Education and do not realise that there are opportunities for all to aspire to reach higher in their education. These groups are hard to reach and even harder to engage, so this plan is to reach out through churches, mosques, community interest groups, clubs, etc. | |
| **Evaluation** | | |

| Activity | Outcomes | Method(s) of evaluation | Summary of publication plan |
|---|---|---|---|
| Community feedback | Anonymous feedback from community groups after visits | Type 1 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Recruitment Data | Increase in BME entrants in line with profiles. Shift in gender balances in line with profiles | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |

| Triennial Review | Review of these programmes, their impact and evaluation strategies | Type 1 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, via (a) paper(s) in the Group's Academic Journals |
|---|---|---|---|

| Intervention strategy: PTA_4 Risks 2 & 3 | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Objectives and targets** | 1.1 | The Group will increase the proportion of BME students in its intake by approximately 1% per annum such that it matches the current proportion in its catchment by September 2027. Specifically, it will target 17% in 2024, 18% in 2025, 19% in 2026 and 20% in 2027. |
| | 1.2 | The Group will increase the proportions of BME entrants to Engineering & Sustainable Technology to reach a minimum of 10% by 2027. |
| | 2.1 | The Group will increase female entry to full-time Engineering and Technology to reach a minimum of 10% by 2027, with individual annual targets of 3% in 2024, 6% in 2025, 8% in 2026 and 10% in 2027. |
| **Risks to equality of opportunity** | 2.1 | There is a clear gender split by subject area in the Group's intakes.  There is no evidence of bias in selection; this split is the result of gender differences in applications to particular subjects. |
| | 2.2 | The ethnic mix in the Group's intake is currently approximately in line with its expectations.  However, the proportion of ethnic minorities in the relevant age groups of its catchment is rising and there is a risk that the intake of BME students may not keep up with this changing demographic. |
| | 3.1 | Perceptions of stereotypical gender subjects and careers may be limiting access to study that candidates might find rewarding. |
| | 3.2 | There are strong perceptions of subjects and career opportunities within local BME communities, which may lead potential BME candidates to believe that some Higher Education opportunities are 'not for them'. |

| Activity | Outcomes | Cross intervention? |
|---|---|---|
| Outreach to the Adult learner community county-wide | Relevant information reaching 1000+ adults per year by 2024/25 | PTA _1, PTA_2, PTA_3 & PTA_4 address different aspects of the same group of risks by different methods |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| through Lancashire Adult Learning | | |
| Administration | Scheme operated effectively | No |
| Evaluations | Evaluation commitments met | No |
| **Evidence base and rationale** | These risks are grouped together because the same activities will serve to mitigate a group of risks.<br><br>Lancashire Adult Learning is a member of the NCC Group and is responsible for adult community learning across the county of Lancashire.  It has regular contacts with several thousand adult learners per year.<br><br>This part of the plan is to use the channels offered by LAL to get information, guidance, case studies, etc. out to targeted sub-groups within this learner body. In particular, this activity will:<br><br>• target BME LAL students with information to address misconceptions about the opportunities available to them and the positive impact of Higher Education;<br><br>• target female LAL students who either already have the necessary qualifications for entry to Engineering & Sustainable Technology programmes or who are engaged in LAL programmes that could lead them to acquire appropriate entry qualifications, with information about progression opportunities and the positive impact of Higher Education. | |
| **Evaluation** | | |

| Activity | Outcomes | Method(s) of evaluation | Summary of publication plan |
|---|---|---|---|
| LAL Feedback | Online survey of targeted groups. | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Recruitment Data | Increase in BME entrants in line with profiles. Shift in gender balances in line with profiles | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Triennial Review | Review of these programmes, their impact and evaluation strategies | Type 1 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, via (a) paper(s) in the Group's Academic Journals |

| Intervention strategy: PTS_1 Risk 6 | |
|---|---|
| **Objectives and targets** | 1.3 The Group believes that the 16.7% gap in progression rates between white and Asian students may be the result of multiple factors, some of which it may not be able to mitigate. However, it will commit to reducing this gap by 2% per annum by providing a new extra-curricular employability programme with specific targets of 15% in 2024, 13% in 2025, 11% in 2026 and 9% in 2027.<br><br>3.1 The Group will narrow the 7% gap in continuation rates between full-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 by 1.5% per annum, virtually eliminating the gap by 2027. Individual year targets will be 5.5% in 2024, 4% in 2025, 2.5% in 2026 and 1% in 2027.<br><br>3.2 It will close the 6% gap in completion rates for full-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 by 1.5% per annum, eliminating the gap by 2027. Individual year targets will be 4.5% in 2024, 3% in 2025, 1.5% in 2026 and 0% in 2027.<br><br>It will close the 7% gap in completion rates for part-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 by 1.5% per annum, virtually eliminating the gap by 2027. Individual year targets will be 5.5% in 2024, 4% in 2025, 2.5% in 2026 and 1% in 2027.<br><br>4.1 The Group will commit to narrowing the gaps in completion rates between students with disabilities and those without. For full-time students it will close the 2017-18 18% gap by 4% per annum and for part-time students it will narrow the 14% gap by 2% per annum. The specific targets for full-time students will be 14% in 2024, 10% in 2025, 6% in 2026 and 2% in 2027. Those for part-time students will be 12% in 2024, 10% in 2025, 8% in 2026 and 6% in 2027.<br><br>4.2 It will commit to narrowing the 8.5% gap in attainment rates between full-time students with disabilities and those without by 2% per annum. The specific targets for full-time students will be 7% in 2024, 5% in 2025, 3% in 2026 and 1% in 2027.<br><br>5.1 The Group will close the 10.5% gap in part-time continuation rates between young and mature student by 2% per annum, with specific targets of 8% in 2024, 6% in 2025, 4% in 2026 and 2% in 2027 |

| Risks to equality of opportunity | 6.1 There is a wide gap in continuation and completion rates between full- and part-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5.<br><br>6.2 Completion and attainment rates for the Group's disabled students are lower than those for students with no disabilities. The majority of its disabled students report either mental health issues or dyslexia.<br><br>6.3 There is a gap in part-time continuation rates between young and mature students. | |
|---|---|---|
| **Activity** | **Outcomes** | **Cross intervention?** |
| Additional workshops | Additional subject specific workshops available to all students. These workshops will provide students with additional opportunities to work with academic staff to address issues related to forthcoming assessments in terms of subject knowledge, assessment requirements and grading criteria. 50% of full-time students access workshops in 2024/25, 75% by 2027/28 | No |
| Additional study support | All students have 2-hour introductory sessions<br>Drop-ins covering:<br><br>• general study skills<br>• academic writing<br>• research methods<br>• referencing<br>available to all students.  50% of full-time students access drop-ins in 2024/25, 75% by 2027/28 | No |
| Administration | Scheme operated effectively | No |
| Evaluations | Evaluation commitments met | No |
| **Evidence base and rationale** | Students on all programmes already receive timetabled academic tutorials as a part of their programmes, and staff maintain an open-door policy to provide a route to seek more specialist help when required.<br>However, the time available for routine tutorials is constrained by cost considerations, and there is anecdotal evidence that some students are reluctant | |

|  | to seek 1:1 help especially from academic staff.  There is also evidence in students' assessment submissions that the marks earned by some students are constrained by their lack of appreciation of professional standards in English, underdeveloped research skills and a lack of confidence in presentation. These actions seek to address this in two ways.  The first is to provide a cross-institution programme of general support for study skills, academic writing, researching, referencing, etc.  It is understood, but not proven, that some disadvantaged students would find it easier to seek and accept help in these matters as part of a formal programme than by seeking it directly from staff. The second method follows on from staff observations that at certain points during the year, particularly in the run-ups to significant assessments, that some students would benefit from targeted subject-specific workshops, giving them a chance to improve their knowledge of materials covered during taught sessions but not fully understood at the time. These activities would be open to all students, but experience shows that the students who would most benefit are those from APP target groups |

**Evaluation**

| Activity | Outcomes | Method(s) of evaluation | Summary of publication plan |
|---|---|---|---|
| Student Questionnaire | Statistical data on students' views on the usefulness of the service provided | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Analysis of interactions | Statistical data of the number and nature of accesses to the service | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Data Analysis | Improvements in performance in line with target profiles | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Triennial Review | Review of the programme, its impact and evaluation strategies | Type 1 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors |

| | | | Externally, via (a) paper(s) in the Group's Academic Journals |
|---|---|---|---|

| Intervention strategy: PTS_2 Risk 7 | |
|---|---|
| **Objectives and targets** | 3.1      The Group will narrow the 7% gap in continuation rates between full-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 by 1.5% per annum, virtually eliminating the gap by 2027. Individual year targets will be 5.5% in 2024, 4% in 2025, 2.5% in 2026 and 1% in 2027. |
| | 3.2      It will close the 6% gap in completion rates for full-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 by 1.5% per annum, eliminating the gap by 2027.  Individual year targets will be 4.5% in 2024, 3% in 2025, 1.5% in 2026 and 0% in 2027. |
| |          It will close the 7% gap in completion rates for part-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 by 1.5% per annum, virtually eliminating the gap by 2027.  Individual year targets will be 5.5% in 2024, 4% in 2025, 2.5% in 2026 and 1% in 2027. |
| | 4.1      The Group will commit to narrowing the gaps in completion rates between students with disabilities and those without.  For full-time students it will close the 2017-18 18% gap by 4% per annum and for part-time students it will narrow the 14% gap by 2% per annum.  The specific targets for full-time students will be 14% in 2024, 10% in 2025, 6% in 2026 and 2% in 2027.  Those for part-time students will be 12% in 2024, 10% in 2025, 8% in 2026 and 6% in 2027. |
| | 4.2      It will commit to narrowing the 8.5% gap in attainment rates between full-time students with disabilities and those without by 2% per annum. The specific targets for full-time students will be 7% in 2024, 5% in 2025, 3% in 2026 and 1% in 2027. |
| | 5.1      The Group will close the 10.5% gap in part-time continuation rates between young and mature student by 2% per annum, with specific targets of 8% in 2024, 6% in 2025, 4% in 2026 and 2% in 2027 |

| Risks to equality of opportunity | 7.1 | The gap in continuation and completion rates between full-and part-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 may result, at least in part, from not having the of out-of-college personal support mechanisms typical of less disadvantaged students. |
| | 7.2 | Completion and attainment rates for the Group's disabled students are lower than those for students with no disabilities. The majority of its disabled students report either mental health issues or dyslexia. |
| | 7.3 | There is a gap in part-time continuation rates between young and mature students. |

| Activity | Outcomes | Cross intervention? |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Support professional** | 25% of students accessing personal support in 2024/25, 75% by 2027/28 | No |
| Evaluations | Evaluation commitments met | No |
| **Evidence base and rationale** | In a recent trial of this concept, students highly valued the availability of HE-specific non-academic, 1:1 signposting, and advice and guidance from a dedicated part-time post. <br><br> This service was accessed by 76 students and many of the issues dealt with related directly to remediation of disadvantage issues.  97.3% of these students were retained.  This support professional was able to resolve many non-academic issues and signpost students to other available help when not able to provide a full solution. <br><br> This action builds on a successful pilot to roll a service out to all students. <br><br> The support role for this intervention has not yet been given a formal title, but will encompass: <br><br> • working with Higher Education students, particularly those from disadvantaged groups, to support their engagement, participation and retention. <br><br> • supporting disabled students in accessing services / assistance to minimise the impact of their disabilities <br><br> • facilitating small group workshops and/or activities for identified students to enable them to develop the expected level of knowledge, skills and behaviour <br><br> • leading a social prescribing mental health project <br><br> • supporting young part-time students to continue in their studies <br><br> • signposting students to internal and external support services as necessary |

| Evaluation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Activity** | **Outcomes** | **Method(s) of evaluation** | **Summary of publication plan** |
| Student Questionnaire | Statistical data on students' views on the usefulness of the service provided | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Analysis of interactions | Statistical data of the number and nature of accesses to the service | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Data Analysis | Improvements in performance in line with target profiles | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Triennial Review | Review of the programme, its impact and evaluation strategies | Type 1 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors. Externally, via (a) paper(s) in the Group's Academic Journals |

| Intervention strategy: PTS_3 Risk 8 | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Objectives and targets** | 4.1 | The Group will commit to narrowing the gaps in completion rates between students with disabilities and those without.  For full-time students it will close the 2017-18 18% gap by 4% per annum and for part-time students it will narrow the 14% gap by 2% per annum.  The specific targets for full-time students will be 14% in 2024, 10% in 2025, 6% in 2026 and 2% in 2027.  Those for part-time students will be 12% in 2024, 10% in 2025, 8% in 2026 and 6% in 2027. |
| | 4.2 | It will commit to narrowing the 8.5% gap in attainment rates between full-time students with disabilities and those without by 2% per annum. The specific targets for full-time students will be 7% in 2024, 5% in 2025, 3% in 2026 and 1% in 2027. |
| **Risks to equality of opportunity** | 8.1 | Completion and attainment rates for the Group's disabled students are lower than those for students with no disabilities.  A substantial minority of its disabled students report mental health issues. |

| Activity | Outcomes | Cross intervention? |
|---|---|---|
| **Counselling Services** | All students wishing to access this service receiving initial help within one term week of request. All students requiring ongoing support provided with appropriate help within 2 weeks of assessment | No |
| **External Referral fund** | Students referred to external agencies, and funded if necessary, within one month of being assessed | No |
| Administration | Scheme operated effectively | No |
| Evaluations | Evaluation commitments met | No |
| **Evidence base and rationale** | The Group provides a limited mental health and counselling service, the feedback from which is that: <br>• 95% felt this support had become more accessible within the college <br>• 83% felt this support service was well advertised <br>• 35% felt there had been a significant improvement in mental health support and that their own mental wellbeing has improved. <br>Currently, this support is highly constrained by available funding and is limited to in-house support. <br>This intervention is to fund and increase in the availability of in-house support and to allow the purchase of external services where these are deemed necessary. | |

| Evaluation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Activity** | **Outcomes** | **Method(s) of evaluation** | **Summary of publication plan** |
| Student Survey | Understanding of the level of use of the service, and of benefits gained on the EPDS.[4] | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Analysis of interactions | Statistical data of the number and nature of accesses to the service | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Data Analysis | Improvements in performance in line with target profiles | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Triennial Review | Review of the programme, its impact and evaluation strategies | Type 1 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, via (a) paper(s) in the Group's Academic Journals |

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[4] The Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale was devised to assess the mental state of mothers suffering from postnatal depression before and after interventions and hence to judge the benefits gained. It has since proved to provide valid judgements of benefits gained from interventions with a very wide range of clients.

| Intervention strategy: PTS_4 Risk 10 & 11 | |
|---|---|
| **Objectives and targets** | 3.1     The Group will narrow the 7% gap in continuation rates between full-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 by 1.5% per annum, virtually eliminating the gap by 2027. Individual year targets will be 5.5% in 2024, 4% in 2025, 2.5% in 2026 and 1% in 2027.<br><br>3.2     It will close the 6% gap in completion rates for full-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 by 1.5% per annum, eliminating the gap by 2027. Individual year targets will be 4.5% in 2024, 3% in 2025, 1.5% in 2026 and 0% in 2027.<br><br>It will close the 7% gap in completion rates for part-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5 by 1.5% per annum, virtually eliminating the gap by 2027. Individual year targets will be 5.5% in 2024, 4% in 2025, 2.5% in 2026 and 1% in 2027. |
| **Risks to equality of opportunity** | 10.1     The Group has strong anecdotal evidence that financial pressures are a major cause of non-continuation. These pressures are very likely to affect students from IMD quintiles 1 & 2 more than other groups and are very likely to contribute to the lower rate of continuation and completion of full-time students in these groups.<br><br>10.2     There is a gap (7%) in continuation rates between full-time students in IMD quintiles 1 & 2 and those in quintiles 3 to 5. There is no clear evidence of the cause of this gap, but it is likely that it results, at least in part, from not having the of out-of-college support mechanisms typical of less disadvantaged students. |

| Activity | Outcomes | Cross intervention? |
|---|---|---|
| Publicising the fund to students | All students aware of available funds | Yes. Linking risks 10 and 11 |
| Considering applications for means-tested assistance | Applications considered within one working week | Yes. Linking risks 10 and 11 |
| Meeting needs | Approved interventions made | Yes. Linking risks 10 and 11 |
| Administration | Scheme operated effectively | No |
| Evaluations | Evaluation commitments met | Yes. Linking risks 10 and 11 |
| **Evidence base and rationale** | Most of the Group's Higher Education students come from social backgrounds that lack the financial and other resources necessary to be resilient to unexpected problems. Many have responsibilities, such as children or dependent adults, that are atypical of HE students.<br>These students can very easily find themselves either in financial crises or lacking access to necessary resources that go beyond general hardship issues. | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Under the previous APP, the Group created a dedicated Higher Education Support Fund that allowed it to intervene, on a proportionate and means-tested basis, to help students deal with such issues.  This has been successful in retaining many students who would otherwise have been lost from the sector.  It has, however, sometimes found itself with insufficient funds to meet an urgent need in full. This APP proposes to operate the same process as previously, but to increase the financial allocation from 6.25% of additional income to 7.5% The support available to students and related eligibility criteria will be explained to them during induction and publicised on the College VLE.  Eligibility criteria are set out under 'Provision of information to students' below. | | |
| **Evaluation** | | | |

| Activity | Outcomes | Method(s) of evaluation | Summary of publication plan |
|---|---|---|---|
| Student Questionnaire | Statistical data on students' understanding of available help | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Analysis of applications | Statistical data of the types of needs met and their costs | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors |
| Data Analysis | Improvements in performance in line with target profiles | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Triennial Review | Review of the programme, its impact and evaluation strategies | Type 1 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, via (a) paper(s) in the Group's Academic Journals Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |

| Intervention strategy: PTP_1 Risk 12 | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Objectives and targets** | 1.3 | The Group believes that the 16.7% gap in progression rates between white and Asian students may be the result of multiple factors, some of which it may not be able to mitigate. However, it will commit to reducing this gap by 2% per annum by providing a new extra-curricular employability programme with specific targets of 15% in 2024, 13% in 2025, 11% in 2026 and 9% in 2027. |
| **Risks to equality of opportunity** | 12.1 | There is a wide gap (16.7%) between progression rates for white and BME students. The Group does not see a similar gap in internal student results data, so this gap appears to be the result of non-academic issues. |

| Activity | Outcomes | Cross intervention? |
|---|---|---|
| The Group will work collaboratively with staff, students, selected employers and other stakeholders to devise a meaningful programme of professional employability skills. | Initial programme developed, materials produced, delivery modes established. | No |
| The Group will make the programme available to all Higher Education students, initially prioritising final-year students, by 2024/25 at the latest | At least 50% of full-time students engaged with the programme by 2026/27 and 75% of students by 2028/29. | No |
| Administration | Scheme operated effectively | No |
| Evaluations | Evaluation commitments met | No |
| **Evidence base and rationale** | The Group does not believe that it fully understands the non-academic skills that students wish to gain or those that employers really want, nor is it sure what format these skills can best be delivered in might be. It proposes to work with stakeholders to create a programme meeting as broad a set of skill needs as possible.<br><br>It will then deliver this programme to students, starting with those who are about to finish their studies and later rolling out to the whole student body to meet the targets set above.<br><br>While this programme will be available to all students, the principal benefit is likely to be felt by those who are not currently accessing optimal employment post-qualification, the largest number of whom are BME learners. | |

| Evaluation | The Group intends to evaluate: |
|---|---|
| | • Student and employer satisfaction with the initial programme design |
| | • Student's views of the programme, on completion |
| | • Student's views on the value of the programme in accessing professional employment / further study. |

| Activity | Outcomes | Method(s) of evaluation | Summary of publication plan |
|---|---|---|---|
| Initial evaluation | Report | Type 1 | Internally only, to:<br>• stakeholders engaged in the development process<br>• the Student Council<br>• the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee<br>• Board of Governors |
| On-completion student survey | Take up and satisfaction data | Type 2 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, by inclusion of summaries in annual publications. |
| Longitudinal Student Survey approx. 12 months after leaving | Students views on the impact of intervention | Type 3 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, via (a) paper(s) in the Group's Academic Journals<br>. |
| | Employment details for graduating students | Type 2 | |
| Triennial Review | Review of the programme, its impact and evaluation strategies | Type 1 | Internal only to the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reporting to the Board of Governors Externally, via (a) paper(s) in the Group's Academic Journals |

## Whole provider approach

The Group is a small provider of Higher Education with approx. 350 students within the scope of this plan. By contrast, its Further Education provision extends to 3000+ students from its local communities and a further 3500+ from the wider county.

As such, it has a wide range of cross-institutional services covering libraries and learning resources, learner services and outreach activities. Where cross-institutional services exist,

the provisions of this plan will be delivered by service specialists alongside other Group activities.

The Group's Higher Education provision is administered as a single University Centre, with a common management structure, shared services, distinct staffing and distinct accommodation at both of the two main sites. Where the provisions of this plan are appropriate only to Higher Education students and are not compatible with cross-institutional services, these will be provided within the University Centre but managed as common activities for all Higher Education students.

By this means, the Group will ensure that APP activities are embedded as broadly as possible across the whole Group.

Student representation in the evaluation and review of this APP will be taken from the Group's Student Council. This is made up of representatives from all Higher Education programmes and has a composition representative, in number and personal characteristics, of the whole student body.

The combination of the diversity of the Student Council and well-established policy and staff practice is sufficient to ensure that the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 will be met in the implementation of this plan.

The Group is committed at all levels to widening access and participation. This commitment has clearly defined target groups and expected outcomes that are shaped by evidence and aligned with other strategies, including those relating to equality, diversity and inclusion; learning and teaching; and business and community engagement.

While the delivery of this plan will be distributed across many parts of the Group, overall responsibility for managing the delivery, evaluation and review of this Plan will be rest with the management team of the University Centre. Monitoring and evaluation will be a responsibility shared between the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee of the Higher Education Academic Board and reporting to the Board of Governors.

## Student consultation

The Group highly values student participation in academic decision-making and has student representation at all levels of its deliberative structures. As part of this, the College has an active Higher Education Student Council made up of student representatives of all its Higher Education provision.

The Group's previous APP was devised in consultation with the Student Council, and the Student Council has been involved in the monitoring of performance against that plan. It was hoped that the Group's next APP would benefit from the same process, but the timing for this APP document was such that it was difficult to get meaningful feedback from a large group of students, coming as it did when many courses had completed their teaching cycles and students were preparing for final assessments. There were no further scheduled meetings of the Student Council at which new plans could be discussed and it was not

practical to call an extraordinary meeting within the required timescales, given students' academic commitments over that period.

The Group, therefore, sought student views by focus activities with students who volunteered to provide feedback despite the awkward timing.  This information is included in Annex A.  In addition, some student views were clear from earlier discussions of the Student Council.  In particular, students strongly supported plans to continue and expand the Higher Education Support Fund. In discussions, students strongly supported the view that personal and resource issues are major contributors to non-continuation and that this flexible mechanism for the alleviation of short-term problems would support continuation and success.  Students also supported proposals for increased academic, personal and mental health support.

The Student Council was offered the opportunity to make a Student Submission, but declined to do so on this occasion because of the pressures of final assessments. It was not possible to seek formal Student Council approval of the final plan before its final submission.

Students will be involved at every stage of the monitoring and evaluation of this plan as set out below.

# Evaluation of the plan

Using the OfS Self-Assessment Tool, the Group scored itself as 'Emerging' for strategic context, programme design, evaluation design and learning from evaluations, but 'Good' for evaluation implementation.  In response, it has set an enhanced evaluation strategy designed to support robust, evidence-based decision making, but recognises that its strategy will continue to evolve over time.

Given its relatively small student numbers, a number of its strategies are based on the Group's best understanding of the needs of the communities it serves, rather than hard numerical evidence.  Consequently, the Group believes that close monitoring will be necessary to establish whether or not its interventions are having the desired effects, and it has designed appropriate evaluation and review processes into each of its intervention strategies to facilitate this.  It is understood that this process may need to result in changes to interventions over time.  Should it be found that strategies need to change, the Group will commit itself to using any released spending to further the objects of this APP by other means, and to a of scrutiny over any new activities equivalent to that set out here/

In addition to these embedded evaluation methods, the Group wishes the whole of its APP intervention to be subject to critical review on a regular basis.  This will be achieved by bringing together the evaluations generated at intervention level, together with reports from those leading them to both the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee and Board of Governors for scrutiny at least twice per academic year.

**Strengthening Evaluation**

The evaluation plan set out against each intervention represents the Group's current understanding of the methods most likely to provide robust evidence of what works and what

doesn't, and of what represents best value for money.  This understanding may change over time, and the Group will seek to strengthen its evaluation strategy.

The OfS Evaluation Self-Assessment Tool provided useful insights into actions needed to strengthen the Group's evaluation strategy.  Taking these in order of time priority, by the end of 2024/25 the Group will:

- Undertake a skills audit of widening participation staff and other key stakeholders to identify the existing levels of evaluation knowledge and skills, any gaps and means by which they might be addressed.
- Establish how the findings of APP evaluations might be disseminated beyond immediate stakeholders to facilitate better consideration of recommendations.

Over the life of the plan, the Group will:

- Provide professional development of evaluation knowledge and skills, as necessary to address any gaps identified above.
- Widen the dissemination of APP evaluations to identified persons / groups and seek their feedback on recommendations.
- Establish stronger strategic oversight of the evaluation process.
- Identify and develop stronger evidence bases to inform APP process design.  In particular, seeking to find or create empirical evidence where none currently exists.
- Produce detailed documentation of activities to enable clearer comparisons between programmes and published literature.
- Identify and engage additional audiences for evaluation results.
- Develop means of identifying and measuring individual change, and recording longitudinal outcomes of participants over time.
- Enhance the engagement of APP staff with published literature and practitioner groups.

**Publication Plan**

Publication of the results of evaluation activities will be as follows.

1. All in-year evaluation activities (e.g. survey results, staff, student and employer feedback, data reports, etc.) generated as part of the evaluation strategies for each intervention will be reported to both the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee.  These activities will be reported to the Higher Education Academic Board and hence to Governors through the minutes of the Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee.
2. Summary reviews of interventions will be reported to both the Student Council and the Academic Standards and Quality, Higher Education Academic Board and hence to Governors, as above.
3. Annual reports will be produced jointly by the Student Council and Academic Standards and Quality Subcommittee reviewing and evaluating the impact of each intervention and recommending changes to intervention plans as necessary.  These reports will be published on the Group's Virtual Learning Environment and external

website.  They will also be included, possibly in summary form, in the Group's annual journal publications.

4. Insights gained from evaluation processes, particularly any relating to what interventions are and are not effective and whether they provide value for money, will be published internally to stakeholders, will be published in the Group's journals and may be published more widely to academic interest groups.


# Provision of information to students

Information will be provided to students by the following means:

| Details of the Access and Participation Plan | <ul><li>Group external websites</li><li>Applicant literature</li><li>Induction literature</li><li>Student VLE pages</li><li>Student inductions and tutorials</li></ul> |
|---|---|
| Performance on the Plan | <ul><li>Student Council</li><li>APP Monitoring Team</li></ul> |
| Evaluation and Review of the Plan | <ul><li>Student Council</li><li>APP Monitoring Team</li></ul> |

The information provided to students will include the following:

**Higher Education Support Fund Eligibility Criteria**

The following criteria are summarised from policy documents available to all Higher Education students via the 'University Centre Student Page' on the Group's virtual learning environment.

Support funds may be paid as loans where the student's circumstances are such that repayment can reasonably be expected within a short period, typically 90 days, (for example, to a student whose maintenance loan payment is delayed) or as a grant if repayment cannot be expected within this period.

All loans / grants are made on the basis of evidenced need following full disclosure of the applicant's circumstances.

**Eligibility criteria**

Applicants must

- Meet the UK residency criteria set out in ESFA funding regulations.

- Have a gross annual household income of less than £37,500 per year. The College may choose to use its discretion where household income exceeds this amount but it is identified that support is needed.
- Demonstrate 'relative financial need' for costs that may deter them joining, continuing or completing their course.
- Have satisfactory engagement at the time of application. This is generally determined by a minimum attendance of 80% but exceptional circumstances may be considered.
- Be enrolled on a programme recognised as Higher Education for Office for Students (OfS) funding purposes.

Additional criterion for Support Loans

- Have a financial need that can be mitigated by a loan that can reasonably be expected to be repaid over a short period.

Additional criterion for Support Grants

- Have a financial need that cannot be mitigated by a loan that can reasonably be expected to be repaid over a short period.

**Support Available:**

- course-related costs, including course trips, books and equipment (where these costs are not included in the tuition fee)
- support with domestic emergencies and emergency accommodation
- transport costs
- professional membership fees and any fees or charges due to external bodies
- support provided by others, providing items or services, or cash direct to the student.

**Emergency Support**

Under certain circumstances students may face genuine emergencies (e.g. no accommodation, unforeseen costs or charges, theft or loss of possessions or money). In such cases financial assistance may be provided to ensure the student can continue with their studies. Under these circumstances it may not be necessary to provide evidence of family income and costs.

# Fees, investments and targets 2024-25 to 2027-28

**Provider name: Nelson and Colne College**

**Provider UKPRN: 10004552**

## Summary of 2024-25 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

**Inflation statement:**

Subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations we will increase fees each year using RPI-X

**Table 3b - Full-time course fee levels for 2024-25 entrants**

| Full-time course type: | Additional information: | Sub-contractual UKPRN: | Course fee: |
|---|---|---|---|
| First degree | All courses of this type are charged the same fees | N/A | 9000 |
| Foundation degree | All courses of this type are charged the same fees | N/A | 9000 |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | All courses of this type are charged the same fees | N/A | 9000 |
| HNC/HND | All courses of this type are charged the same fees | N/A | 9000 |
| CertHE/DipHE | All courses of this type are charged the same fees | N/A | 9000 |
| Postgraduate ITT | All courses of this type are charged the same fees | N/A | 9000 |
| Accelerated degree | * | N/A | * |
| Sandwich year | * | N/A | * |
| Erasmus and overseas study years | * | N/A | * |
| Turing Scheme and overseas study years | * | N/A | * |
| Other | * | N/A | * |

**Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2024-25**

| Sub-contractual full-time course type: | Sub-contractual provider name and additional information: | Sub-contractual UKPRN: | Course fee: |
|---|---|---|---|
| First degree | * | * | * |
| Foundation degree | * | * | * |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | * | * | * |
| HNC/HND | * | * | * |
| CertHE/DipHE | * | * | * |
| Postgraduate ITT | * | * | * |
| Accelerated degree | * | * | * |
| Sandwich year | * | * | * |
| Erasmus and overseas study years | * | * | * |
| Turing Scheme and overseas study years | * | * | * |
| Other | * | * | * |

**Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2024-25 entrants**

| Part-time course type: | Additional information: | Sub-contractual UKPRN: | Course fee: |
|---|---|---|---|
| First degree | All courses of this type are charged the same fees | N/A | 6750 |
| Foundation degree | All courses of this type are charged the same fees | N/A | 6750 |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | All courses of this type are charged the same fees | N/A | 6750 |
| HNC/HND | All courses of this type are charged the same fees | N/A | 6750 |
| CertHE/DipHE | All courses of this type are charged the same fees | N/A | 6750 |
| Postgraduate ITT | All courses of this type are charged the same fees | N/A | 6750 |
| Accelerated degree | * | N/A | * |
| Sandwich year | * | N/A | * |
| Erasmus and overseas study years | * | N/A | * |
| Turing Scheme and overseas study years | * | N/A | * |
| Other | * | N/A | * |

**Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2024-25**

| Sub-contractual part-time course type: | Sub-contractual provider name and additional information: | Sub-contractual UKPRN: | Course fee: |
|---|---|---|---|
| First degree | * | * | * |
| Foundation degree | * | * | * |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | * | * | * |
| HNC/HND | * | * | * |
| CertHE/DipHE | * | * | * |
| Postgraduate ITT | * | * | * |
| Accelerated degree | * | * | * |
| Sandwich year | * | * | * |
| Erasmus and overseas study years | * | * | * |
| Turing Scheme and overseas study years | * | * | * |
| Other | * | * | * |

# Fees, investments and targets

## 2024-25 to 2027-28

**Provider name: Nelson and Colne College**

**Provider UKPRN: 10004552**

## Targets

### Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

| Aim [500 characters maximum] | Reference number | Lifecycle stage | Characteristic | Target group | Comparator group | Description and commentary [500 characters maximum] | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Units | Baseline data | 2024-25 milestone | 2025-26 milestone | 2026-27 milestone | 2027-28 milestone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Increase the overall proportion of BME entrants | PTA_1 | Access | Ethnicity | Other (please specify in description) | | The target is based on mirroring expected increases in the propoportion of BME residents in the Group's catchment areas as larger BME proportions in schools and colleges work their way through to HE. The baseline year is internal Group data for 2022/2023 | No | The access and participation dataset | 2022-23 | Percentage points | 17 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| Increase the proportion of BME entrants to Engineering, Sustainable Technology programmes | PTA_2 | Access | Ethnicity | Other (please specify in description) | | Internal data shows that these courses have particularly low BME recruitment and are being given specific targets within the global target. The baseline year is internal data for 2022/2023 and the targets have been set to make a meaningful improvement over the life of the plan. | No | Other data source (please include details in commentary) | 2022-23 | Percentage points | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 10 |
| Increase femal participation in technical subjects | PTA_3 | Access | Other | Other (please specify in description) | | Internal data shows that the Group has low female participation in these subjects, despite good career prospects for femal graduates. The baseline year is internal data for 2022/2023 and the targets have been set to make a meaningful improvement over the life of the plan. | No | Other data source (please include details in commentary) | 2022-23 | Percentage points | 7 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| | PTA_4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_5 PTA_6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_7 PTA_8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_9 PTA_10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_11 PTA_12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

### Table 5d: Success targets

| Aim (500 characters maximum) | Reference number | Lifecycle stage | Characteristic | Target group | Comparator group | Description and commentary [500 characters maximum] | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Units | Baseline data | 2024-25 milestone | 2025-26 milestone | 2026-27 milestone | 2027-28 milestone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| Aim | Ref | Lifecycle stage | Characteristic | Target group | Comparison group | Description | Cross-institution | Data source | Baseline year | Unit | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reduce the gap in continuation rates for full-time students in IMD Q1&2 and IMD Q3-5 | PTS_1 | Continuation | Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD]) | IMD quintile 1 and 2 | IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5 | The milestone targets for this aim were based on the maximum improvement that was felt to be achievable, with the intention of closing this gap over the life of the plan. The baseline is the 4-year aggregate dashboard data because there timeline data for this aspect is incomplete. | No | The access and participation dataset | Other (please include details in commentary) | Percentage points | 7 | 5.5 | 4 | 2.5 | 1 |
| Reduce the gap in completion rates for full-time students in IMD Q1&2 and IMD Q3-5 | PTS_2 | Completion | Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD]) | IMD quintile 1 and 2 | IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5 | The milestone targets for this aim were based on the maximum improvement that was felt to be achievable, with the intention of closing this gap over the life of the plan. The baseline is the 4-year aggregate dashboard data because there timeline data for this aspect is incomplete. | No | The access and participation dataset | Other (please include details in commentary) | Percentage points | 6 | 4.5 | 3 | 1.5 | 0 |
| Reduce the gap in completion rates for part-time students in IMD Q1&2 and IMD Q3-5 | PTS_3 | Completion | Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD]) | Other (please specify in description) | IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5 | The milestone targets for this aim were based on the maximum improvement that was felt to be achievable, with the intention of closing this gap over the life of the plan. The baseline is the 4-year aggregate dashboard data because there timeline data for this aspect is incomplete. | No | The access and participation dataset | Other (please include details in commentary) | Percentage points | 7 | 5.5 | 4 | 2.5 | 1 |
| Reduce the gap in completion rates between students with disabilities and those without | PTS_4 | Completion | Reported disability | Other (please specify in description) | No disability reported | The milestone targets for this aim were based on the maximum improvement that was felt to be achievable, but it not felt to be reaslistic to aim to completely close this gap over the life of the plan. The numbers of students reporting specific disabilities are too small to make robust statistical judgements, so the target group is all students declaring disabilities. | No | The access and participation dataset | 2017-18 | Percentage points | 18 | 14 | 10 | 6 | 2 |
| Reduce the gap in attainment rates between students with disabilities and those without | PTS_5 | Attainment | Reported disability | Young (under 21) | Mature (over 21) | The numbers of students reporting specific disabilities are too small to make robust statistical judgements, so the target group is all students declaring disabilities. The baseline is the 4-year aggregate dashboard data because there timeline data for this aspect is incomplete. | No | The access and participation dataset | Other (please include details in commentary) | Percentage points | 8.5 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| Reduce the gap in part-time continuation rates between young and mature students | PTS_6 | Continuation | Age | Mature (over 21) | Young (under 21) | These milestonses have been set to ensure that the Group adapts its treatment of young part-time students such that they are supported to continue at same rates as their mature colleagues.  Data here is based on the 4-year aggregate data in the APP dataset. | No | The access and participation dataset | Other (please include details in commentary) | Percentage points | 10.5 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| | PTS_7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | PTS_11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Table 5e: Progression targets**

| Aim (500 characters maximum) | Reference number | Lifecycle stage | Characteristic | Target group | Comparator group | Description and commentary [500 characters maximum] | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Units | Baseline data | 2024-25 milestone | 2025-26 milestone | 2026-27 milestone | 2027-28 milestone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reduce the gap in progression rates between white and Asian students | PTP_1 | Progression | Ethnicity | Asian | White | The Group has very high employment levels among its Asian heritage leavers, but much of this employment is not at the expected level. The baseline is the 4-year aggregate dashboard data because there timeline data for this aspect is incomplete. The target aims to make ambitious progress on closing this gap, but it is not expected that it can be closed over the life of this plan | No | The access and participation dataset | Other (please include details in commentary) | Percentage points | 16.1 | 15 | 13 | 11 | 9 |
| | PTP_2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |